AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of managing products each having a plurality of parts, the method comprising:

creating an original structural tree of a product which defines a relationship between the product and its parts;

assigning part numbers to the product and parts, the same part number being assigned to products and parts having the same structure;

assigning unique serial numbers to the product and at least major parts thereof, different serial numbers being assigned to separate products and parts even if they have the same structure;

entering the part numbers and serial numbers in the structural tree;

storing the resultant structural tree in a database connected to a computer;

marking the serial numbers on the product and parts assigned therewith;

linking histories of the product and parts to which the serial numbers are assigned, to the serial numbers; and

storing the histories together with their linking information in the database,

wherein the serial number of the product is changed when at least one of the parts of the product is replaced with a new part, while the serial number of the product is not changed when no part of the product is replaced.

2. (Previously Presented)   The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising:

linking attributes of the product and parts to which the serial numbers are assigned, to the serial numbers; and

storing the attributes together with their linking information in the database.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended)   A parts management server connected to a database and user terminals, for managing products each having a plurality of parts, the parts management server comprising:

means for supporting a user to create a structural tree of a product to be stored in the database, wherein the structural tree defines a relationship between the product and its parts, and contains part numbers assigned to the product and the parts and unique serial numbers assigned to the product and at least major parts, wherein the same part number is assigned to products and parts having the same structure, and different serial numbers are assigned to products and parts even if they have the same structure; and

means for providing information of the structural tree stored in the database to a user terminal when it is retrieved by using the serial numbers,

wherein the supporting means is further adapted to support the user to enter in the database histories of the product and parts to which the serial numbers are assigned,

wherein the serial number of the product is changed when at least one of the parts of the product is replaced with a new part, while the serial number of the product is not changed when no part of the product is replaced.

5. (Previously Presented) The server as defined in Claim 4, wherein the supporting means is further adapted to support the user to enter in the database attributes of the product and parts to which the serial numbers are assigned.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended)   A structural tree of a product having a plurality of parts, wherein the structural tree is made by a method comprising:

creating an original structural tree of a product which defines a relationship between the product and its parts;

assigning part numbers to the product and parts, the same part number being assigned to products and parts having the same structure;

assigning unique serial numbers to the product and at least major parts thereof, different serial numbers being assigned to separate products and parts even if they have the same structure;

entering the part numbers and serial numbers in the structural tree;

storing the resultant structural tree in a database connected to a computer;

linking histories of the product and parts to which the serial numbers are assigned, to the serial numbers; and

storing the histories together with their linking information in the database,

wherein the serial number of the product is changed when at least one of the parts of the product is replaced with a new part, while the serial number of the product is not changed when no part of the product is replaced.